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and then a comparison with more favored conditions and above all the simple faith of these brave men and women whose lives are unending battles against the hardships of an inhospitable land and a changing sea, form the themes of most of the stories.

R. M. BROWN.

AFRICA

Notre Beau Niger. Par Félix Dubois. 299 pp. Map and illustrations. E. Flammarion, Paris, 1911. 5 Fr. 8 x 5.

This is an account of fifteen years of French colonization in the Sudan and especially along the Niger River. The journey of the author began at Algiers. The first stage of his travels was across the Sahara to Gao on the Niger. The account of the author's wanderings in the desert region is reserved evidently for another volume, "*L'énigme du Sahara*," advertised to appear soon. The second stage of the journey begins at Gao, and, after various stops along the way, ends at Bammako, far up the Niger. The author is a firm believer in the possibilities of the French Sudan, and the reader must be constantly on guard lest he be swept along by the enthusiasm of the writer and thereby expect to find in this portion of Africa the sole example of great achievement in colonization. Some of the author's extravagances may be accounted for by understanding that it seems necessary to him to overcome considerable opposition in his native land, where many have been taught that the French Sudan is one of the more refined parts of the lower regions. Dubois reports the country as yielding nothing to the Nile country in promise. In this spirit the author visits and recounts the present conditions of the towns of Gao, Kabara, Timbuktu, Mopti, Djenné and finally Bammako. In the chapter on Kabara, the port of Timbuktu, there is an account of the postal service of the country and an interesting comparison of the conditions of former journeys, replete with tragedy, from Kabara to Timbuktu and the journey to-day with all its comforts along a beautiful and comfortable highway, "*le Boulevard et le Bois de Boulogne de Tombouctou*." The chapters on Timbuktu describe the life there, and in dealing with the past the old account of the discovery of Timbuktu by Robert Adams is rehearsed, which the author discredits, characterizing the action of Adams as a "bluff." The volume contains, besides the details of the journey, many interesting things, such as the construction of the hotel at Kulikoro in a manner to withstand the ravages of the ants, the railroads already constructed, for which the author has excessive praise, the projected lines, an interesting account of the introduction and production of cotton and a Sudanese school.

R. M. BROWN.

Erwachende Agrarländer. Nationallandwirtschaft in Ägypten und im Sudan unter englischem Einflusse. Von Siegfried Strakosch. xii and 235 pp. Map. Verlagsbuchhandlung Paul Parey, Berlin, 1910. M. 7.

The "agricultural countries in process of awakening" of which the author speaks are Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. He discusses the possibilities of these two countries from the point of view of what he calls *national agriculture*, that is to say, in judging the agricultural status of a country he first examines the natural conditions which the agricultural methods must meet in order to be successful, and then determines the value of those methods, not by their degree of up-to-dateness according to modern European standards but by the degree in which they are adapted to those natural conditions. Taking the plough for an example, he shows that the quasi-antediluvian instrument which the

Fellah uses answers the purpose much better than any modern plough could, and explains why such a one will probably never do on Nile soils.

Modern methods will be, on the other hand, a great factor in the further development of Egypt wherever irrigation is required, because wide tracts of the land are deserts without it, while they bear one crop every year when flooded, and two or even three crops when irrigated by means of ditches. In this respect, indeed, the country is not only behind the times but even behind its own past; for it is as good as proven that the area under cultivation was larger in the times of Old Egypt than it is now. The reason is that irrigation works require capital and a concentration of power, both of which have been lacking in Egypt for centuries, because, by virtue of a very peculiar lease system, the large land-owners had taken almost no part in the cultivation of their lands, but left the care of them entirely to the Fellah tenants, who, each on his own small farm, were unable to handle such a large problem.

The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, which extends from the second cataract to the Belgian Congo and covers about 1,000,000 square miles, is not such a homogeneous agricultural and historical unit as the Nile valley. Although it was successively under the influence of Egyptian, Christian, and Arabian culture, its agricultural system bears no trace of any of them, but is distinctly of the negroid type. The negro never rises above small farming and employs neither instruments nor cattle in tilling the soil. The author estimates that there are about twenty ploughs in the whole country north of Khartum, and exactly ten south of that place, viz. the 10 wooden ploughs bought by the government for their experiment farm on the Blue Nile. Rains are more frequent than in Egypt, but not very regular, so that the negro farmers become almost nomads by being obliged to migrate from one place to the other according to the occurrence of the rains. Others stick invariably to the same places, because they live in such strained relations with their fellow tribes that they must remain stationary in order to maintain their claim to the soil. On the whole, the population of this part of the Sudan is very scarce, and the country might support many times the actual number of inhabitants, so that the stimulus for improvement is entirely absent because there is always food enough for everybody.

The Anglo-Egyptian understanding about this part of the Sudan is a kind of symbiosis which benefits both Egypt and England. England needs the Sudan because it controls the fate of Egypt by controlling the upper Nile, and also for the sake of the Cape-to-Cairo railroad. But it would be very difficult for England sufficiently to assert her authority at such a distance from the home country, in an almost inaccessible region where neither troops nor provisions could be dispatched with any degree of promptness, and in the midst of a hostile population. Egypt is nearer, locally and historically, and it has an excellent army. The alliance with Egypt enables England, therefore, to preserve peace and order at the least possible expense, while to Egypt the organizing skill and colonial experience of England is a great help in establishing a civilized government.

In Egypt the signs of an agricultural awakening are noticeable everywhere. The irrigation works, and the area under cultivation likewise, are continually increasing, and in this process the Fellahs are proving a very valuable element. Although they cannot be called a race anthropologically, they certainly are the descendants of the farmer caste of Old Egypt who love the soil which they till, and since the reform of the tax system has improved their general economic situation, the younger generation has become less fatalistic and indifferent, less

distrustful of innovations than it was before. The demand for fertilizer increases and the fields become more and more productive; the Fellah begins to appreciate the work of the Khedivial Society, and he sends his children to school.

The number of and interest in the schools has increased wonderfully since the British occupation. The school budget rose from £2,300 in 1881 to £450,450 in 1906, and private benefactors vie with each other in endowing institutions of learning. There are at present 4,324 Kuttabs (village schools), besides many higher primary and secondary schools, engineering schools, girls' schools, normal schools, trade schools; there is an Agricultural College at Ghizeh, and the idea of a modern national University of Egypt is gaining ground more and more rapidly.

The most meritorious body, for the agricultural development of Egypt, is the Khedivial Agricultural Society of Egypt. It was founded in 1898, as a free association of paying members, mostly farmers, which was to arrange exhibits, make experiments, encourage agricultural research, procure seeds and fertilizers, and promote the interests of the members and of agriculture in Egypt generally. It was reorganized in 1904, for the purpose of establishing branch associations, under the leadership of graduates of Ghizeh College, in all the fourteen provinces of the country. If things continue at this rate, the area under cultivation in Egypt will soon be doubled.

In the Sudan similar progress cannot be expected so soon. The problem there is not how to awaken an old civilization from a sleep of centuries but how to create a new one literally out of nothing, in a region where everything seems to conspire against it; abundance and want, each fatal to progress in its own way; climate, desert, jungle, disease; enormous distances, lack of roads, sparsity of population. The thorough knowledge of these conditions is the first prerequisite to any attempts at cultivation, and therefore the work of the English has been limited so far to the study and opening up of the country itself. The investigation of the climate and soils, water supply, domestic products, and the character of the population, the fight against sleeping sickness, the building of roads and telegraph lines and, especially, the establishing of law and order, without which products can neither be raised nor brought to market, have so far absorbed almost all the work of the English pioneers. As the size of the country is a great obstacle to the work of experiment stations, conditions being so different in different regions that the results obtained have, comparatively, but a limited value, the governmental institutions at Khartum are sending out traveling teachers to work in the different provinces. They are obtaining satisfactory results.

Educationally, too, everything is yet in the initial stage. In the northern provinces a number of "Kuttabs" have been founded, and teachers' courses at Gordon College, Khartum, at Omdurman, Suakin, and Rufaa, are to supply instructors for them. There are also six higher primary schools, and three trade schools. The missions, too, are doing very satisfactory work for the general uplifting of the country, even where they do not make many converts; where they do, they also establish schools and hospitals. The greatest agricultural problem which confronts the government is the creation of a regular water supply, because the water needed for irrigation would either diminish the share of Egypt, or have to be taken from regions upstream which are partly on foreign territory. When this problem is solved, and the general intellectual standard of the population somewhat improved, there is good reason to hope

that the combination of foreign capital and domestic labor will secure to this part of the Sudan a foremost place among the producers of tropical and sub-tropical products.

MARTHA KRUG GENTHE.

ASIA

The Kingdom of Afghanistan. A Historical Sketch. By G. P. Tate. ix and 224 pp. Maps and index. Bennett Coleman & Co., London, 1911. 9½ x 6½.

Having had dull experience with this style of composition, the French critics have hit upon a classification, with an unwritten wealth of connotation, as *matériaux pour servir*. It contains in full measure the material upon which the history of Afghanistan may be written. It bears every mark of careful research, of collation of a great number of rare and almost inaccessible documents, of accurate presentation of both sides of moot questions. An introduction by Sir Mortimer Durand is indicative of the appreciation in which the author's diligence is regarded by that high authority; yet Sir Mortimer does not wax enthusiastic over the result, nor does he agree entirely upon all points. In manner lacking the least spark of that dash with which the Afghan tribesmen have made their inroads upon the history of India, the matter of this volume is entitled to the most serious consideration. Very little has yet been discovered as to the genetic source of the Afghans, probably it will be little more than a pamphlet in the history of inner Asia, but an inordinate amount of space is given to the discussion of an origin from the lost ten tribes of Israel; even the missionaries have given over the attempt to write that professional mystery of their art into serious ethnography. But when the author arrives at the period of documented history he gives a concise summary of the campaigns of different Afghan rulers directed upon Persia on one frontier and upon India on the other, showing particularly the result this activity had upon the consolidation of an Afghan state. In the most modern period he is obscure, probably of political design, upon the status of Afghanistan as the buffer between Russia and England at the scientific frontier.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Afghanistan: The Buffer State. Great Britain and Russia in Central Asia. A Comprehensive Treatise on the Entire Central Asian Question. By Capt. Gervais Lyons. With an Introductory Note by Sir Reginald C. Hart. vii and 232 pp. Maps* and index. Luzac & Co., London, 1910. 7s 6d. 8½ x 5½.

From the time when Semiramis, Queen of Assyria, invaded India, there has been a Central Asian question, and during most of these years it has been a very complex one. A book, then, which attempts to explain the various stages and results of past invasions and the present diplomatic intrigue is valuable, and, in view of the recent disputes in Persia, enlightening; yet inasmuch as it is written by an Englishman, a representative of one of the countries in this border-land strife, one must expect to find the trend of the book favorable to the English occupancy of the Iranian plateau. The book opens with a statement of the English point of view, to wit, that Persia, Afghanistan and Western China remain independent and favorable to the British, that the Bosphorus be closed to Russia and that Russia be prohibited a port on the Persian Gulf. The value of India to the British government is given in detail, and the means of protection along the frontier of that country and the distribution and occupation

* Listed under "Asia" and "The Nearer East" in *Bull.*, Vol. 44, No. 2, Feb., 1912, pp. 157 and 158, respectively.